

Message Text

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, RP, CASC (LEHMAN, AUGUST MCCORMICK JR.)
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE ANTI-AMERICAN TWIST IN GOP HANDLING OF LEHMAN CASE

REF: MANILA 7456 AND PREVIOUS

1. AMCIT LEHMAN TELEPHONED EMBOFF TWICE ON JUNE 9 PROFESSING DEEP CONCERN AT LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN CASE. LEHMAN SAID THAT BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR CHINA, PRESIDENT MARCOS ORDERED SUSPENSION OF PANEL HEARINGS AND SWITCH IN OBJECT OF INVESTIGATION FROM CONSPIRACY TO ASSASSINATE PRESIDENT TO REBELLION. LEHMAN SAID HE HAS SEEN TWO AFFIDAVITS BY GOVERNMENT WITNESSES (ONE OF WHOM A GOP INTELLIGENCE OPERATIVE) CLAIMING THAT AMBASSADOR BYROADE AND THEN-DEFENSE ATTACHE COL. ALFRED PATTERSON WERE INVOLVED IN POLT. LEHMAN SAID AFFIDAVITS ALSO NAME A CERTAIN PHILIPPINE GENERALSANCHEZ AS IMPLICATED. ACCORDING LEHMAN (WHO CLAIMS SOLID INSIDE INFORMATION TO SUPPORT ALL HIS ALLEGATIONS) GOVERNMENT IS PLANNING TO PUBLICIZE THIS SCENARIO TO STIR UP ANTI-US SENTIMENT AFTER MARCOS' RETURN FROM CHINA, WITH ADDITIONAL PRVISO THAT UNNAMED HIGH FIGURES IN WASHINGTON WERE AWARE OF US PARTICIPATION IN PLOT.

2. LEHMAN CALLED FROM QUARTERS AT MALACANANG WHERE HE IS LIVING IN FORMER DENTAL CLINIC (WITH MAID AND GIRL FRIEND) AND WHERE HE SAYS HE IS DOING WORK FOR ARMY HELPING TO IMPORT AUTOMOTIVE PARTS. HE IMPLIES HE IS MOTIVATED PARTLY BY CONCERN AS LOYAL CONFIDENTIAL

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AMERICAN AND PARTLY FROM APPREHENSION FOR OWN FATE SINCE HE

SAYS NEW CHARGE (REBELLION) COULD CARRY SENTENCE OF UP TO 12 YEARS IN JAIL. HE ASKED FOR EARLY MEETING WITH EMBBFF TO DISCUSS MATTER FURTHER.

3. SWORTH NOTING THAT IN PAST LEHMAN AWWAYS WARY OF SPEAKING FREELY OVER TELEPHONE. THIS TIME HE COMPLETELY UNGUARDED, SUGGESTING EITHER HE TOO AGITATED TO WORRY OR HE DID NOT CARE THAT CONVERSATION MIGHT BE TAPPED, OR THAT HE WANTED IT TO BE RECORDED.

4. COMMENT: LEHMAN BEHAVIOR HAS BEEN ERRATIC FROM START BUT PARTICULARLY SO IN LAST FEW WEEKS. AS RECENTLY AS JUNE 2 HE ASSURED EMBOFF HE AGAIN CONFIDENT THAT CHARGES AGAINST HIM WOULD BE REDUCED TO INSIGNIFICANCE IN RETURN FOR HIS FORTH-COMING TESTIMONY IMPLICATING LOPEZ AND OSMENA FAMILIES.

5. COMMENT: REFTEL NOTED POSSIBILITY THAT EMERGING ELEMENTS IN LEHMAN CASE, INCLUDING ALLEGED PARTICIPATION OF AMERICAN "HIRED GUNS" LINKED TO MAFIA, ARMS DEALER CUMMINS, ETC., COULD EASILY TAKE ANTI-AMERICAN TWIST IF MARCOS EVER FELT IT SERVED HIS INTERESTS. IN LIGHT OF PRIVILEGED CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH LEHMAN LIVING AT MALACANANG, IT OBVIOUSLY POSSIBLE THAT GOP IS USING HIM TO PASS US INTIMIDATING INFORMATION. HOWEVER, LEHMAN'S PAST RECORD OF UNRELIABILITY SO MARKED THAT IT IMPOSSIBLE TO ASSESS TRUTH OF HIS LATEST STORY. AS DEPT. AWARE, HOWEVER, MURKY CHARGES OF EMBASSY COMPLICITY IN ANTI-MARCOS PLOTTING (THE ADEVOSO PLOT) WERE CURRENT IN 1970/71.

6. WE PLANNING MAINTAIN CURRENT LEVEL OF CONTACT WITH LEHMAN AND EMBOFF SETTING UP FURTHER APPOINTMENT WITH HIM WHICH WILL PROBABLY TAKE PLACE EARLY NEXT WEEK.

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